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MADERA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE MADERA COUNTY HISTORIAN

MADERA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

Volume VIII - Number 4 October 1968

AMENDED IN SENATE FEBRUARY 8, 1893.

AMENDED IN SENATE FEBRUARY 4, 1893.

Senate Bill. No. 198

INTRODUCED BY MR. GOUCHER,

JANUARY 12, 1893.

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON COUNTIES AND COUNTY BOUNDARIES.

AN ACT

TO CREATE THE COUNTY OF MADERA, TO DEFINE THE BOUNDARIES THEREOF, TO DETERMINE THE COUNTY SEAT, AND TO PROVIDE FOR ITS ORGANIZATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS, AND TO CLASSIFY SAID COUNTY.

The above is a photograph of the upper half of the front page of the Senate Bill introduced by Senator George Goucher.

The Madera County Historical Society is fortunate in having acquired many documents, newspaper items and pictures related to the formation of the county in 1893.

1968 marks the 75th year since Madera County was created, the county has celebrated during the entire year, we have called 1968 our Diamond Jubilee. Therefore the Board of Directors decided the last Historian for 1968 should tell the story of the birth of Madera County.

MADERA COUNTY IS BORN!

From OUR COUNTY'S YESTERYEARS by Robert M. Wash, Fresno County Counsel and Past President of the Fresno County Historical Society. A chapter from a series of articles published in 1955. Permission was obtained from Mr. Wash to reprint this article. Copied and submitted by Mrs. June English, Fresno, California, January, 1968.

PERFIDY AND DIVISION

The original Fresno County as formed April 19, 1856, out of the territory of Merced and the mother county of Mariposa was a gigantic thing. It included not only all of our present territory, but all of that of Madera plus portions of Inyo and Mono Counties, being all of the original county lying east of the crest of the Sierras, and large chunks of the present counties of Tulare, Kings, San Benito and Mariposa. It included a portion of the present Yosemite National Park and its northern line bisected Mono Lake. Its eastern line was the Nevada state line or what was then Utah Territory.

It was only natural and inevitable that sooner or later those portions east of the Sierras would be cut off, since they were geographically isolated from Millerton and the other Fresno County settlements. And so, in 1861, the County of Mono was created with everything east of the crest of the mountains made a part of this new county.

Even so, this left a county tremendous in size, stretching from mountain crest to mountain crest and from the Kings to the Chowchilla Rivers and including the settlements of Madera, Chowchilla, Raymond, Coarsegold, Oakhurst or Fresno Flats, as it was then called and Crane Valley, the site of present Bass Lake.

As the 90's began, there started a movement on the part of many persons residing on the north side of the San Joaquin River to divide the county at the river and create a new county on the north side with Madera the county seat. The law was that any area containing a population of five thousand people or more could be authorized by the Legislature to hold an election within the territory upon the question of creating a new county and if the proposition carried by a two-thirds vote, a new county was formed and the rest of the original county had nothing to say about it. It was generally conceded that if an election were called north of the river, it would carry, and so the real fight was before the Legislature upon the question of authorizing an election.

As the 1893 Legislature met, there was great activity on both sides which came to be known as divisionists and anti-divisionists. The divisionists argued that the county was too large; that a great majority of those from north of the river wanted their own county, were willing to pay their own way and that the rest of the county had no right to prevent them from realizing their ambitions. The anti-divisionists claimed that to divide the county would be to double the costs of government and hinder development of the area, destroying the future of the county as a political force and that anyhow the divisionists were just a bunch of land speculators and disgruntled democratic politicians who had been defeated at the last election and who wanted to create jobs for themselves.

The divisionists maintained a lobby at Sacramento and wined and dined the Legislators, which led their opponents to point out that the wine came from south of the river since there was none then made on the north side. The first petition of the divisionists was stolen by someone from the enemy camp.

and they had to start over with another.

Not all from the north side of the river were divisionists, and not all on the south side were antis, but this was generally the lineup. Alexander Gordon, a rancher east of Fresno, declared that Fresno County was "Nearly large enough for a state and cannot remain this way always, and the country north of the river was never of much account to Fresno County anyway."

T. E. Hughes, one of the largest land owners in and around Fresno, was a divisionist, pointing out that the proposed new county would have a population of seven thousand which was more than the entire Fresno County had in 1878.

As the time for legislative decision drew near, feeling on both sides ran high. The Expositor which had years before been in the forefront of the battle to bring the county seat from Millerton to Fresno, was violently anti-divisionist. Finally a mass meeting was called for at Kutner Hall, (1100 Block of Fulton Street) for the evening of January 28th for the purpose of adopting a resolution to send to the Legislature for or against division. State Senator G. G. Goucher, and George Mordecai were to be present to determine sentiment. Goucher and Assemblyman George W. Mordecai from north of the river were openly divisionists. Shortly before the meeting was commenced a false fire alarm sent many Fresnans to the other end of town. As they drifted back and approached the hall for the meeting which they supposed to have been called for 8 o'clock, they found the Maderans about two hundred strong in charge of the Hall, possessed of the seats and already organized with Miles Wallace of Sanger and Madera, a defeated democrat, as chairman of the meeting. They were about to adopt a resolution favoring division. W. D. Grady, a skilled lawyer, led the fight for the Fresnans, his tactics being an effort to delay proceedings until the Fresnans could arrive.

The Expositor under a headline entitled, "A Howling Time" described the meeting as "The wildest, most tumultous body of men ever assembled in this city," and went on to state that while the Fresnans were eating dinner the Maderans arrived about 7:30 P.M. and took possession of the hall. That they showed every sign of organization and drill saying, "Maderaites, instructed as Stonewall Jackson used to give his soldiers when making a charge, "Yell like devils." The divisionists yelled like all Pandemonium broke loose." Finally, two or three times as many Fresnans as divisionists were in attendance and some semblance of debate was had. W. D. Grady, W. H. McKenzie, Fulton G. Berry, J. R. White and others led those opposed to division. The divisionists were headed by E. H. Cox, Return Roberts, H. C. Daulton and John Griffin.

Daulton, who had been a former member of the Fresno Board of Supervisors said, "This county is too big at the present day--large enough almost to make two states. We now have two daily papers in Madera and we simply ask you to let us go in peace. I hope when I die I will die within the borders of old Fresno County. We want a divorce from you and we don't want you to pay any alimony. If my wife were to tell me that two thirds of her wanted to go away from me and she didn't want me to pay her any alimony, it would be very cruel on my part if I didn't let her go, although my wife is dear to me and she has given birth to every child that I have." This provided great laughter. T. E. Hughes in arguing for division said that Fresno was dead because of lack of enterprise and when Emil F. Bernhard, an anti-divisionist, observed that the anti-divisionists could not get a fair hearing with the pro divisionist chairman and secretary, Hughes replied, "That shows the truth of what I have said. The Maderans were on hand - the Fresnans late as usual." S. N. Griffith, in argu-

ing against division said that he had a just pride in this glorious county as every other citizen had and "if we dismember the county we destroy the entire political force of this great inland empire."

The Expositor in reporting the meeting said, "Some fellow from the north side of the river named Conley got up to make a speech and although he screwed up his voice to the key dear to the heart of a schoolboy making a declamation, yet he was not heard more than three yards away and he was soon invited to take his seat. He seemed to realize that he was not filling a long felt want and dropped out of sight in the surging mass of divisionists and anti-divisionists," and the Expositor went on to quote, "He sank into the deep with bubbling groan without a grave, unwept, uncoffined, and unknown." The Republican, in reporting that meeting was more kindly to this "schoolboy" voice who was later to become the first superior judge of the new Madera County, serving in that capacity for 28 years and who in fact was W. H. Conley, father of our Judge Philip Conley. He passed away in 1954. The Republican said, "W. H. Conley of Madera said that he, unlike Mr. Grady had no war recollections to appeal to. He was a native of California, born within the confines of the great San Joaquin Valley. The magnificent advance in prosperity of Fresno County was due to the enterprise of her citizens. One quarter of the taxes and one-fifth of the population of this county reside on the north side of the river. He failed to see why any intelligent citizen could offer any opposition to a separation since the people of the north side had faithfully borne their proportion of the expenses of the government, and he said, 'We have not asked the people of this county for a single cent. All that we ask is to give us an opportunity as a free people, inhabiting territory equal to the State of Delaware; to exercise the right of self government'."

As the meeting progressed it apparently became more and more turbulent. After the divisionists had all spoken, Grady was to be given twenty minutes to summarize for those opposed. After he had said a few words, the yelling from the divisionists became so loud he could not be heard at all and he stopped talking until things quieted down a bit. When he resumed speaking, the chairman at once announced that his 20 minutes were up. The bedlam was such that he was forced to quit. The Expositor said the meeting "passed all control. There was no more attention paid to the Chairman than if he were a child." The Chairman always declared any divisionist motion carried; although the anti-divisionists outnumbered them 2 to 1. Finally a motion was made and a standing vote called for. Since the Maderans had pre-empted all the chairs, the Fresnans had to stand anyway and when the affirmative was called, this meant that nearly everyone in the hall was standing up. The Expositor said that the "secretary pretended to count but did not because no one could count the surging mass. The secretary announced that the affirmative vote was 365 although in fact about 800 were standing. When the negative was called, all the divisionists sat down leaving about six hundred standing. The secretary did not count, but simply announced that the motion had carried, where upon scenes of uproar and confusion beggared description."

In any event, the meeting was reported to Sacramento as having favored division and on February 25th, the Senate Bill authorizing the creation of Madera County passed 63 to 12 and in due course the county created. Incidentally, the writer has heard the late Judge Conley and the late Joseph Barcroft of Madera, who also attended that famous meeting, on several occasions relate how the Maderans instead of riding their train into the depot stopped it a considerable distance to the north so as not to disclose to the Fresnans their strategy and that the false alarm which drew the Fresnans "off side" was not

at all "unexpected".

Many Helped in the County's Formation

In our limited space it will be impossible to give a lengthy biography of each person, not only because of space but in some cases we do not have access to information on them.

This issue of the Historian is dedicated to the many fine men who gave of their time and talent to form and promote Madera County in those difficult times.

The stories that follow in most cases, are gleaned from newspapers of that era and from historical data in the files of the Historical Society.

Senator George Goucher was one that comes to our attention because at the State Government level he played a very significant role.

GEORGE GOUCHER

Mariposa can claim Mr. Goucher, so can Fresno County, and of course Madera County can. Mr. Goucher was born in Petersburg West Virginia. He came to Mariposa County first, practiced law there and was District Attorney for a while, then moved on into what was then Fresno County and beginning in 1893 became very interested in the division of the counties. He was a State Senator and in a good position to help the division movement along. He introduced the famous Senate Bill No. 198, "To create the County of Madera". He was one of the main speakers at the meeting on January 28, 1893. Mr. Goucher later became District Attorney of Madera County. He was married to Marian Jones. They had five children, four boys and one girl, Merle, now Mrs. H. Clay Daulton of Madera. Mr. Goucher passed away in 1911, at the age of 57. Mrs. Goucher passed away in 1957, both having contributed much to Madera County.

GEORGE W. MORDECAI

Assemblyman Mordecai worked closely with Senator Goucher on county division.

The January, 1962, Volume II - No. 1 issue of the Historian gives quite a complete story on the Mordecai family. We know of the family today as Brooke and Louise, children of George W. Mordecai who reside at the old home, "Refuge". Geooge played a very important part in Madera County history and helped in county government as long as he lived. He passed away in 1920. He came to the county in 1867. He served two terms in the State Legislature.

RETURN ROBERTS

Return Roberts is remembered for many things in relation to Madera County. Banking, his beautiful home on North C Street, (later home of Dr. Ransom), and the way in which he influenced justice and banking credit. The Historical Society has very limtted information on him but has some fine photographs of the entire family. He was an ardent worker for county division.

E. H. COX

Another staunch supporter of county division but again we seem to have little information on him.

He was a bookkeeper for Madera Flume and Trading Company, and this gave him an opportunity to see the possibility of starting Madera Sugar Pine Company. Cox went east and interested men with capital who were

willing to invest. This is a long story. E. H. Cox is included here in this Historian mainly because he worked very hard for county division. In the latest book by Hank Johnson, "Thunder in the Mountains", there is interesting data on Wm. Thurman, Return Roberts and E. H. Cox.

CAPT. R. P. MACE

Capt. Mace was very active in the movement for division and the Historian for Vol. VI No. I contains a complete story on his life.

Law office of Francis A. Fee, Judge Conley standing Elmo Clark secretary. 1915

JUDGE CALHOUN

We were unable to get any really accurate information on him, other than that he was from Hildreth, and was the first speaker at the meeting in Kutner Hall. He said, "We propose to marry Madera, to support and clothe her, and to pay all of her expenses, and I cannot understand why the people south of the river should object. We don't ask you to pay a dollar".

THOMAS E. HUGHES

Thomas Hughes has often been called the "Father of Fresno", maybe he should also be called the "Father of Madera County", because even though he lived in Fresno he really urged coonty division. (We might add here that at the time of the

fire outbreak on the night of January 28, 1893, William H. Hughes was fire chief of Fresno, later to become Madera County Recorder.) There are many living in Madera related to Thomas E. Hughes. (June English of Fresno has given us a good story on him, we hope to use it later in a Historian.)

MILES WALLACE

Miles Wallace, well known attorney, and second District Attorney will long be remembered as the chairman of the famous meeting held in Fresno on January 28, 1893. His ability as a public speaker was demonstrated that day. The April issue of the Vol. VII - No. 2 Historian gives a good account of his life.

W. H. LAREW

Larew was a well known attorney and was Madera County's third elected District Attorney, (he succeeded ex-Senator Goucher) and previous to that he served out the remainder of the term of Miles Wallace. He was born in 1855 in West Virginia, came to California in 1875. He taught school, for 13 years, was County Supt. of Schools in Mariposa County. He came to Madera County in 1891. He led the movement in 1892 for county division. Along with Goucher and Mordecai he worked toward the goal of division. He married Miss Jane Pratt of Mariposa, they had three children, Christine, J. W. Larew and Virginia, (Mrs. Weber) the latter Madera County Probation officer for many years. He passed away in 1920.

COMMISSION APPOINTED

Senator George Goucher's senate bill providing for the creation of Madera County passed the Assembly February 25, 1893.

A commission was appointed by Governor Markham to conduct the election and make other arrangements for the organization of the new county. May 16 was set for the election.

The commission members were; Henry Clay Daulton, Chairman, O. H. Eastin, J. F. Ward, W. R. Flint and J. M. Griffin (Later postmaster) and W. C. Ring was clerk. Arch McDonald, Justice of the Peace swore them in.

W. C. RING

Mr. Ring was appointed clerk for the commission appointed by the governor. He worked with the commission in making all of the arrangements for the first election to be held on May 16, 1893. He was well known for his beautiful handwriting. He came with his family across the plains in the gold rush days. He taught school in Placerville, knew Edwin Markham and Mark Twain well. He came to Madera in 1882. He was married to Laura Zuver. They had two children. Will (deceased) and Lucille Ring Isackson of Madera. Their old home was on the corner of "C" and 3rd Street. Mr. Ring was principal of the old Eastside School when Capt. Mace was a trustee. Mr. Ring was County recorder, later became county treasurer and served until his death in 1918. The late Willis Petty was appointed to serve the remainder of Ring's term.

O. H. EASTIN

Mr. Eastin was one of the five commissioners appointed by Governor Markham to act as officers for Madera County during the period before the first election. Mr. Eastin is described as a man of intelligence

and great personal worth. Eastin School district was named for him.

ELECTION RESULTS - MAY 16, 1893

Superior Court Judge	William M. Conley
District Attorney	Francis Fee
County Clerk	C. J. Eubanks
County Auditor	E. E. Wilcox
County Recorder	Arch McDonald
County Sheriff	William H. Thurman
County Tax Collector	Krohn
County Treasurer	W. M. Amer
County Assessor	Hoskins
County School Supt.	Hawkins
County Surveyor	Frank Smith
County Coroner	Knowlton
County Administrator	Redfield
County Division	Yes - 1179 No. - 368
County Seat	Madera - 1065
	Minaret - 567
	Berenda - 2

County Supervisors were:
David P. Fowler - 1st District
Henry Clay Daulton - 2nd District
J. (Jake) Myer - 3rd District
W. B. Aiken - 4th District
J. E. Chapin - 5th District

WILLIAM M. CONLEY

There is so much to tell about Mr. Conley. Later on the Historian will publish a complete history on him.

Of course we remember him mainly as Madera County's first Superior Court Judge, also he was one of the youngest judges ever elected in California. He held office for 28 years, elected 6 times.

He worked hard on county division and together with Senator Goucher and Assemblyman Mordecai the act was passed.

Many felt that Conley was too young, not realizing his ability. He noted opposition in the mountain area so got busy and campaigned.

His son, Judge Phillip Conley lives in Fresno and is a prominent citizen and a Justice in the State Supreme Court.

The old Conley residence in Madera still stands and in use today.

Judge Conley once stated, "In those days men were men".

FRANCIS FEE

Among the attorneys of California who have gained prominent positions in the profession, mention belongs to Francis A. Fee of Madera, who practiced in both the civil and criminal branches of the law, and, in addition to his private practice, acted as attorney for the Madera Board of Trade, the Madera Sugar Pine Company, the Commercial Bank of

Madera, the Madera Electric Light and Water Companies and various other concerns of an important nature.

On selecting a location for practice, Fee first located in Syracuse, Otoe County, Nebraska, where he established himself shortly after his admission to the bar. From there in 1888, he came to California and opened an office in Madera. During 1892-93, he took an active part in the county division contest and with other leading citizens, helped to secure the organization of Madera County.

At a special election of May 16, 1893, pursuant to the organization of the county, he was elected district attorney on the independent ticket by a majority of 222 over his Democratic opponent.

WILLIAM M. THURMAN

William Thurman is another that deserves a book written on his interesting career. It is a story that should be done, but here we will just give a few statements on this truly great man.

He is called the "Father of Madera", he gave the town its name, founded in 1876.

He promoted the California Lumbering Company, the great flume of world wide renown.

We remember him especially as the first County Sheriff. His home is still standing on North C Street in Madera.

FRANK E. SMITH

Frank E. Smith was first county surveyor. He was a well known authority as a civil engineer. He was a graduate of the University of Nebraska. He made two maps of Madera County, one in 1897, one in 1908. He resigned in 1899 in favor of A. M. Acton but continued his surveying and civil engineering, also engaged in real-estate and insurance business. He was a brother of the late Mrs. J. B. Williams. His wife was the former Grace Blackmun. They had one daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Smith Vineyard.

HENRY CLAY DAULTON I

There is a vast amount of material on Henry Clay Daulton I. We plan to have an entire Historian on the Daulton family soon so will not write as much now. Henry Clay Daulton, was outstanding in many ways· as an early pioneer, cattleman, county and state leadership, mining interests and in spite of his wife interests he reared and educated his ten children. These ten children through the foundation of strong inherited tendencies worked their way into positions of more than ordinary merits and responsibilities. His voice was heard many times urging the division of the county and his famous statement on divorce in relation to the division is well known. (Quoted in Robert Wash article) Mr. Daulton passed away in 1893, October 15. He was killed in a runaway, on his way home from a Board meeting.

He was the first chairman of the Madera County Board of Supervisors.

One writer about Mr. Daulton had this to say about him: "He developed everything to a high standard, whenever it was possible to do so.

J. E. CHAPIN

We must not confuse J. E. Chapin with E. H. Chapin (E. H. was County Supervisor in 1899). J. E. Chapin was the first County supervisor from District V, 1893. J. E. Chapin lived in the Cascadel area, near North Fork We have no story on Mr. J. E. Chapin.

DAVID B. FOWLER

Mr. Fowler was the son of W. F. Fowler, an early Kern County Farmer. David was born in Nebraska 1860, came to California in 1874. First he was interested in real estate, then worked for Sugar Pine Lumber Company. Elected justice of peace in 1892. After Madera became a county, he was the first supervisor of District I. Perhaps many recall his son, Cecil.

W. B. AIKEN

W. B. Aiken was the first supervisor from District 4. He was born in Louisiana in 1830, came to California in the early days and was in the cattle business around Raymond. He married Martha Ann Taylor (decendant of Zachary Taylor). They had ten children, 5 girls and 5 boys. William F. Aiken late husband of Mrs. Ethel Aiken was one of the 5 boys.

SOME OTHER FIRSTS

First county officer to resign after the formation of Madera County was Constable Stanley R. Murray of Township 4. His resignation was accepted by the Board of Supervisors on October 5, 1893. Stanley R. Murray was the second Superior Court Judge of Madera County, serving from 1921 to 1952.

First civic action of new county government under the commission was on October 5, 1893.

First School bonds in Madera County were issued on October 5, 1893 Alpha School. Berenda followed the next year.

First High School was opened in the fall of 1893. Mrs. Mace and Mrs. Wear started the movement for this.

EARLY ACTS OF NEW COUNTY BOARD

1. Purchase of books and supplies for offices.
2. November 8, 1893 accepted bid of $1,150.00 for construction of Cottonwood and Sand Slough bridge.
3. Fred Barcroft received a contract to furnish 12 stoves and 5 cash boxes.
4. December 19, 1893, accepted a bid for construction of the Raymond Jail.
5. January, 1893 electric franchise was granted to N. Rosenthal.
6. March 5, 1894 accepted bid from W. O. Breyfogle for $6,775.00 for County Hospital.
7. Official seal of county was adopted July 5, 1893.

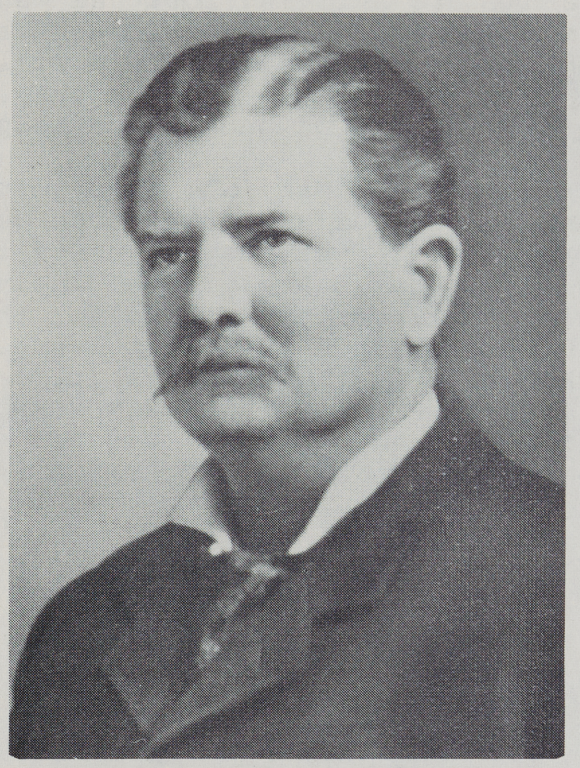
FIRST COUNTY COURT HOUSE

First official meeting held in Masonic Hall.

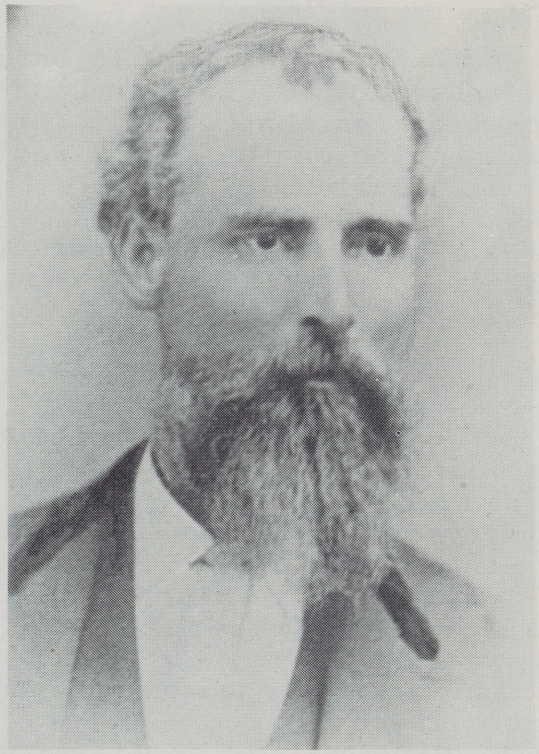
The upper story of the Dworack Building (no longer standing) was rented for use as a Court House, on May 29, 1893. Rental set at $65.00 per month. Three days later the upper story of the N. Rosenthal Building, where Madera Drug Store is now, was rented as a County Court room at $50.00 per month.

There are several men that we have been unable to find information on, in any of our records. We wish we could tell you about C. J. Eubanks, E. E. Wilcox, W. M. Amer, L. U. Hoskins, E. A. Hawkins, Dr. Knowlton, Arch McDonald, and H. Krohn.

Readers of this Historian are invited to send in stories of any of the people that were connected with the formation of the county.

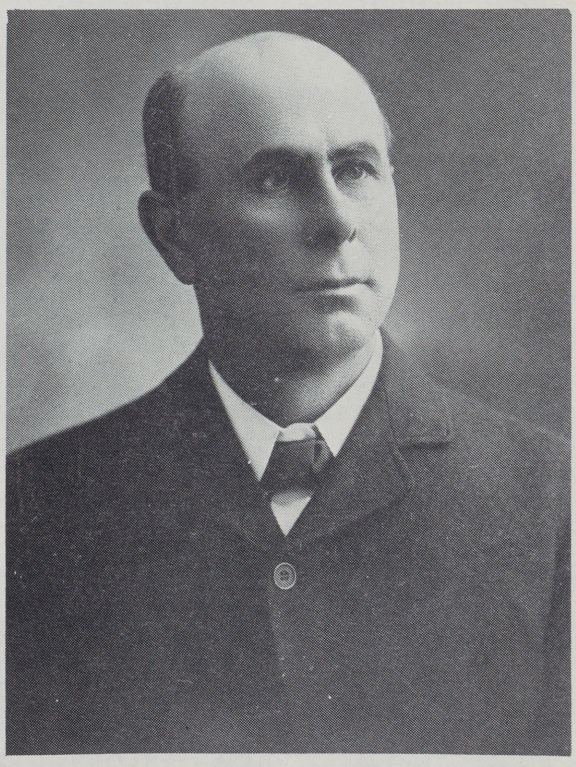


George G. Goucher



Henry Clay Daulton I

William H. Conley



William H. Larew

ANNUAL MEETING

Our Annual Meeting will be held on January 22, 1969. The Constitution provides that we hold the annual meeting on the fourth Wednesday in January.

We will elect new officers for 1969.

DUES

Beginning in 1969, our plan as adopted at the March 25th meeting:

Single Membership	$ 3.00
Married Couple	5.00
Student	1.00
Sustaining	10.00
Life Membership	100.00

Our year is based on the regular calendar year.

Dues are delinquent on July 1, 1969.

Make dues payable to the Madera County Historical Society, P.O. Box 478, Madera, California.

NEW BOOK

Madera, written by Charles Clough is on sale in various places throughout Madera County. Price $2.95 plus 15¢ tax.

HELP?

We can always use it. There are so many ways in which you can be of help. There is work you could take home to do. If you get started once you will become so interested you will want to continue. You meet such interesting people too.

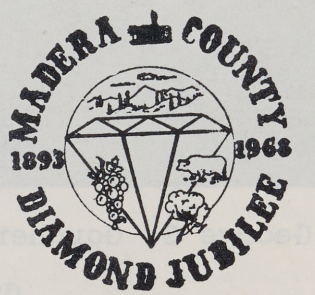
NEW MEMBERS

Everyone of us are really membership chairmen. Remember the only qualification for membership is interest in our County History. You have friends and neighbors; tell them what we are striving for. We want a museum, we can get it if we really want it. A museum in Madera will be an asset for the whole county, so new members is one way to help.

We have had many who have joined just to get our Historian each quarter. Almost every day requests come in from other state groups, individuals and libraries, asking for the entire set since the first issue, asking for cost of membership.

EVERY MEMBER GET A NEW MEMBER

OUR DIAMOND JUBILEE SYMBOL



THE MADERA COUNTY HISTORIAN

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